

DEFENSE HEALTH NETWORK PACIFIC RIM

NAVAL MEDICAL FORCES PACIFIC

PACIFIC PULSE



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Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms better maternal-infant care with revitalized Multi-Service Ward

Capt. Daniel Clark (left), commanding officer of Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, and Cmdr. Christine Higgins (right), Maternal-Infant Nursing Department head and staff certified nurse midwife, cut the ribbon during a ceremony on May 29 marking the relocation and revitalization of the hospital's Multi-Service Ward. The upgraded space, which houses the Maternal Infant Nursing Department (MIND), enhances inpatient care for military families aboard the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (U.S. Navy photo by Christopher C. Jones, NHTP/NMRTC Twentynine Palms public affairs officer).

A MESSAGE FROM REAR ADM. BROWN

Team,

As I step into the role of Director, Defense Health Network Pacific Rim and Commander, Naval Medical Forces Pacific, I want to take a moment to recognize the tremendous accomplishments of this team—achievements that reflect your deep commitment to readiness, innovation, and excellence in health care delivery.

This edition of our newsletter highlights the extraordinary work carried out across our network and region under the leadership of Rear Adm. Guido Valdes. From expanding partnerships and improving data-driven decision-making tools to bolstering medical force readiness and overall combat readiness, strengthening care coordination with the VA, and enhancing services for patients and families, what you have achieved is impressive by any measure. Your efforts demonstrate how collaboration across MTFs, NMRTCs, and headquarters elements produces results that directly support our warfighters, maintain our ability to respond to contingencies, and improve the lives of all those we serve.

It's clear that I've inherited a team of skilled, dedicated professionals—leaders and innovators who understand the weighty responsibility of our mission and rise to meet it every day. I'm grateful to be joining you at such a pivotal time, and I look forward to working with each of you as we continue to build on this strong foundation.

(Continued on p. 3)



Rear Adm. Kevin Brown

DHA PRIORITIES:

- Enabling combat support to the joint force in competition, crisis, or conflict
- Building a modernized, integrated, and resilient health delivery system
- Dedicated and inspired teams of professionals driving military health's next evolution



A MESSAGE FROM REAR ADM. BROWN

Moving forward, we must be preoccupied with remaining patient-centered, team-oriented, and mission-focused to ensure we continue to heal and ease suffering while defending our country against persistent and emerging threats. That work will take all of us, working together, to maintain momentum and tackle the challenges ahead.

Thank you for what you've done, and what you continue to do, to care for our people, protect the force, and keep Navy Medicine ready. I'm honored to serve alongside you.

Respectfully,
RDML Kevin Brown, MC, USN
Commander, Naval Medical Forces Pacific
Director, Defense Health Network Pacific Rim



Rear Adm. Kevin Brown delivers remarks during the NMFP change of command, July 25. (DVIDS)



Rear Adm. Kevin Brown, right, and Rear Adm. Guido Valdes, left, cut a cake after the NMFP change of command, July 25. (DVIDS)



Surgeon General's Lines of Efforts:

- LOE 1. Deliver Expeditionary Medicine Systems (EXMEDS)
- LOE 2. Increase Sailor and Marine Deployability
- LOE 3. Provide Quality Healthcare and Patient Safety Across the Naval Force
- LOE 4. Recruit and Retain Navy Medicine Shipmates

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Coding Contract Bridge

Defense Health Network Pacific Rim will launch a network-level coding contract on July 1, 2025, to provide consistent coding support to military treatment facilities. Thirty-two full-time equivalent contract coders, supervised by one coding supervisor, will remotely code encounters focusing on clinic billables, inpatient, APV/Observation/ED, and outpatient services. The contract, with a base period through February 28, 2026, and three option periods, aims to increase efficiency, improve accuracy, and standardize business processes by centralizing coding support and eliminating the need for individual MTFs to manage separate coding contracts. The initiative will be funded by resources previously allocated for existing coding contracts.



Enrollment & Eligibility Tracker

The DHN Pacific Rim has developed an enrollment and eligibility tracker covering all nine network MTFs from January 1, 2022, to May 31, 2025. This tool allows Network and MTF leadership to track enrollment trends by beneficiary category, from parent to child MTFs, over the last four years. The tracker includes a glossary and SOO enrollment targets, enabling efficient drill-down for variance analysis, identification of best practices, and implementation of actionable interventions to improve and sustain performance.

Provider Availability Tool

The DHN Pacific Rim has implemented a provider availability tool covering all nine MTFs. This tool visualizes DHA Provider Deduction Tool data, allowing Network and MTF leadership to analyze provider deductions, workload, and time reporting. Users can drill down by HIPAA taxonomy or product/service lines to assess the impact of deductions on productivity, clinic capacity, and appointment targets. The tool aims to standardize FTE and productivity tracking, identify discrepancies between available FTE and DMHRSi data, and improve oversight of standard deductions in accordance with draft 6025.15 (Appendix A).

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

NMCSO Supports Plane Crash Victims

Following the recent aircraft crash in the Murphy Canyon military housing area, representatives from NMC San Diego's Patient Relations Office, Mental Health Directorate, and Pastoral Care Services provided on-site support at a local family resource event May 27-28. The team offered guidance on medical benefits, TRICARE billing, psychological first aid, and spiritual support, ensuring families received accurate information and felt supported. NMCSO continues to assist affected beneficiaries with personalized care coordination and benefit access. Of the 44 affected families, 30 belonged to NMCSO.



Naval Medical Center San Diego

Okinawa Recognized for Sustainability

On May 22, USNH Okinawa received the 2025 Greenhealth Partner for Change award from Practice Greenhealth (PGH), recognizing its ongoing commitment to improving environmental performance and building sustainability and resilience into operations. PGH has partnered with DHA to track sustainability metrics and allow military hospitals to benchmark their performance against civilian counterparts.

Streamlining MHS GENESIS Reactivation

A tool developed by the network's Health Care Operations teams is now available for MHS GENESIS providers to track user accounts suspended or deactivated due to prolonged absences. The tool enables MTFs to proactively identify and reactivate provider accounts, ensuring seamless access upon their return. This minimizes delays and maintains uninterrupted patient care.

NHCP, VA Collaboration Milestone

On June 10, Dr. Micah Blais of the VA completed a total hip arthroplasty on a VA beneficiary at NH Camp Pendleton. This marks the first surgical case performed by a VA surgeon at the hospital and opens opportunities for increased efficiency and productivity through collaboration.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Healthcare Partnerships in Japan Grow

To strengthen partnerships and improve healthcare, two DHN Pacific Rim MTFs in Japan recently engaged with their host-nation counterparts. USNH Okinawa hosted physicians from Naha City Hospital, featuring tours and joint lectures on pediatric asthma, while a USNHO team toured the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Naha Hospital to learn about its capabilities. Similarly, medical administration officers from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force toured USNH Yokosuka. These exchanges foster mutual understanding and enable future collaborations, enhancing care for service members and all those we serve.



Staff from USNH Okinawa tour the JGSDF Hospital in Naha. (USNH / USNMRTC Okinawa Public Affairs)

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Showcasing Healthcare for Marines

On May 30, 2025, Brig. Gen. Nick Brown, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations West and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, toured NH Camp Pendleton to learn about healthcare delivery aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. He met with hospital leadership and visited optometry, physical and occupational therapy, radiology, and the emergency department, thanking sailors and staff for their support to Marines stationed on the base.



Brig. Gen. Nick Brown, CG of Marine Corps Installations West and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, meets NHCP physical and occupational therapy department staff while touring the facility May 30, 2025. (NH / NMRTC Camp Pendleton Public Affairs)

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Corpsmen Lead Life-Saving Training

Hospital Corpsmen 1st Class (HM1) Danny Carr, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (HM2) Skylar Mock, and HM2 Benjamin Anders from NMRTC Lemoore who work at NHC Lemoore developed and led Tactical Combat Casualty Care training stations at the clinic for EMF-Bravo staff on May 21, demonstrating combat life-saving skills. The small-group lessons maximized the learning opportunity for staff.



Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, demonstrate lifesaving techniques during tactical combat casualty care training, Nov. 7, 2024. (DVIDS)

Nutrition Management Serves Up Excellence

On May 29, NMC San Diego announced Nutrition Management/Galley Operations as the recipient of the Commander's Cup for Outstanding Service Excellence and Customer Service for the 2nd Quarter, FY-25. The award recognizes the department that exemplifies the highest service standards for staff and patients. Nutrition Management ensures optimal health and satisfaction for beneficiaries and care teams.

Drill Improves Code Blue Response

NH Camp Pendleton conducted a Code Blue drill in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit on June 5 to assess emergency response capabilities and knowledge of hospital response protocols. The drill, focused on an adult cardiac arrest scenario, identified minor areas for process efficiency and, overall, the team performed well.



Staff assigned to NMCS D's ICU perform a code blue drill on a simulation mannequin in the hospital's ICU Sept. 10., 2020. (NMCS D DVIDS)

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Twentynine Palms Corpsmen Celebrate 127th Birthday

NMRTC Twentynine Palms, which staffs NH Twentynine Palms, commemorated the Hospital Corpsman's 127th birthday on June 17 with a ceremony honoring past and present corpsmen. Vietnam War veteran and Fleet Marine Force corpsman Paul "Buzz" Baviello, author of "Corpsman Up," delivered a keynote address emphasizing the vital corpsman-patient relationship. The ceremony included a Blessing of the Hands led by Lt. Cmdr. Nicholas Suddath, the Hospital Corpsman Oath led by Petty Officer 1st Class Courtney Smith, and a cake cutting. Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Seymour, the command's eldest corpsman, and Seaman John Udanoh, the youngest, cut the cake, symbolizing knowledge transfer between generations. The celebration supports the Defense Health Agency's mission by reinforcing corpsmen's values, promoting readiness, and fostering excellence to ensure high-quality healthcare for service members and families.



Photos from Twentynine Palms' Hospital Corps Birthday celebration June 17, 2025. (NH / NMRTC Twentynine Palms Public Affairs)



REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

San Diego Corpsmen Honor Their Legacy

Sailors assigned to NMRTC San Diego and working at NMC San Diego celebrated the 127th birthday of the U.S. Navy Hospital Corps with a series of events highlighting the Corps' legacy and continued relevance. The observance began with the Hospital Corpsman Ball on June 14, featuring retired Marine Master Sgt. Danny Santos, who spoke about the enduring role of corpsmen in sustaining warfighter readiness. Events continued with a Hospital Corpsman Cup Challenge and culminated in a cake-cutting ceremony on June 17 at NMCS. These activities honored the Corps' history of battlefield support, lifesaving care, and evolution in support of modern combat operations and healthcare.



NMC / NMRTC San Diego's Hospital Corps birthday ball, June 14, 2025. (NMCS Facebook)



Recruiting Efforts Support at USNH Guam

Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Pacific Commanding Officer Cmdr. Hooper and his team visited USNH Guam on June 10, touring the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) Clinic to build cohesion and understand recruit processing. USNH Guam is the only military treatment facility with a MEPS clinic, processing 1,500 applicants annually, reflecting the high per capita recruitment rate from Guam and surrounding islands.

Coast Guard CO Visits USNH Guam

U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam Commanding Officer Cmdr. Clark and her team visited the MTF on June 18 to tour the facility. Discussions focused on USNH Guam's capabilities and services, mental health, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), overseas screening, and casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) drills to coordinate future joint exercises.

DEFEND THE NATION

Innovate and Modernize

Lemoore Finance Technician Saves Funds

On May 28, NHC Lemoore financial technician Richard Thompson provided exceptional support by assessing and optimizing the clinic's contracted printer inventory. After departments requested new printers, he evaluated the current inventory, guided staff through repair request procedures, and expedited the repair process. His proactive efforts optimized printing operations and generated cost savings.

Oak Harbor Staff Tour Local Hospital

NHC/NMRTC Oak Harbor staff, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI) commanding officer, and local state representatives, toured Whidbey Island Hospital May 22. They explored opportunities to increase access to sexual assault exams and decrease travel time for beneficiaries. Discussions also focused on care coordination and warm hand-offs during discharges.

New and Improved Ward Enhances Maternity Care

On May 29, NH Twentynine Palms relocated the Maternal Infant Nursing Department (MIND) and Multi-Service Ward to an improved space on the hospital's 3rd floor. MTF Director Capt. Daniel Clark and Cmdr. Christine Higgins marked the reopening with a ribbon cutting. The enhanced space improves patient comfort, department logistics, and communication, supporting quality care and operational efficiency. Proximity to surgical staff streamlines care for C-sections, and Hospitalman Lucia Carano's murals enrich the patient experience. With 259 babies delivered in 2024, this revitalization supports the DHA mission of providing high-quality, patient-centered care for expectant mothers and newborns.



Photos from USNH Twentynine Palms' ribbon-cutting ceremony May 29 marking the relocation and revitalization of the hospital's Multi-Service Ward (NH / NMRTC Twentynine Palms DVIDS)

DEFEND THE NATION

Innovate and Modernize

Automated Dispensing System Installed

On June 17, an automated medication dispensing system (CII Safe Pyxis) was installed at NH Twentynine Palms' Adult Medical Care Clinic, overseen by Director of Medical Services Lt. Cmdr. Pamela Foss. The system, designed for secure storage and tracking of controlled substances, enhances medication safety, improves efficiency, and ensures secure management of controlled substances.



341st Medical Support Squadron pharmacy's Pyxis CII Safe narcotics vault . (DVIDS)

Lab Upgrades Save Money

Naval Health Clinic Lemoore's laboratory launched a new chemistry platform June 9, eliminating outdated testing methods and reducing chemistry operating costs by 26%.

Yokosuka MRI Contract Signed

On June 17, USNH Yokosuka received the fully executed MRI lease contract, signed by the DHA contracting officer and Redhawk Group International. The 60-month service contract includes one base year plus four option years. The contract terms include delivery and installation within six months and an MRI technician to operate the unit.



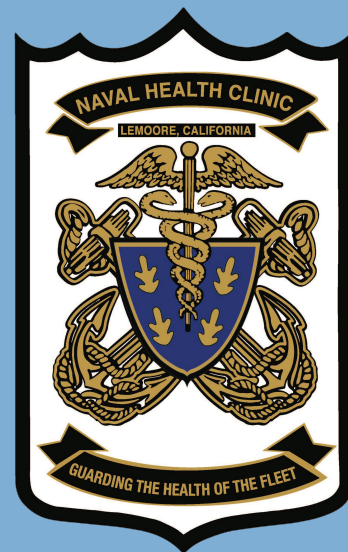
MRI at NMCS. (NMCS DVIDS)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Lemoore IT Team Optimizes MHS GENESIS Interface

From mid-April to the end of May, NHC Lemoore IT team member Justin Bennett seamlessly integrated new chemistry platforms into MHS GENESIS for the clinic's laboratory. Bennett coordinated local resources, Cerner and Oracle assets, and DHA Medical Device Integration Office leadership throughout the implementation and validation of the laboratory information system interface. His efforts eliminated outdated testing methods and reduced chemistry operating costs by 26%.



Mass Casualty Drill Boosts Hospital Readiness

On May 21, NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms personnel participated in Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center's (MCAGCC) annual, base-wide Semper Durus mass casualty drill, ensuring seamless medical support and coordination. During a simulated live-fire injury, Emergency Management Specialist Richard Osborne orchestrated a helicopter transport to the emergency department. Chief Hospital Corpsman Kayla Seim, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (HM3) Gamez, Hospitalman (HN) Ayden Massey, and HN Jessica Sanderson participated in the field. Cmdr. Christina Carter, Lt. Cmdr. Kathryn McMurtray, Lt. Jacob Odom, and Lt. Jillian Dunbar served as evaluators. Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Bailey, chief duty officer, and the duty section were standouts for their professionalism. The exercise provided valuable cross-training with Emergency Medical Services, the San Bernardino County Fire Department, and MCAGCC Mission Assurance, supporting the DHA mission of bolstering readiness for every casualty scenario.



Semper Durus drill at NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms. (NH/NMRTC Twentynin Palms DVIDS)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Oak Harbor Surgeon Perform First Joint Surgery at WhidbeyHealth

Two orthopedic surgeons performed the first total joint surgery at WhidbeyHealth, an ERSA site, for a retired beneficiary.



Outstanding Performance by Twentynine Palms' Lab

NH Twentynine Palms completed an Association for the Advancement of Blood & Biotherapies (AABB) inspection May 30, resulting in an outstanding performance. The laboratory, led by Lt. Cmdr. Clara Pangco, and the nursing staff received high praise, ensuring high-standard medical services for beneficiaries.

Training Future Optometry Professionals

On June 3, NH Twentynine Palms' optometry department began hosting an optometry student from Western University for a 12-week rotation to teach crucial skills to future professionals while also providing exposure to work opportunities in a military treatment facility.

Support Mission to Guam Complete

On June 4, NH Twentynine Palms' Lt. Kevin Hunsinger returned from a month-long deployment as an emergency department nurse supporting USNH Guam, completing the command's support which began Dec. 12 with Lt. Jodi Carroz's four-month deployment. This supports the DHA mission of ensuring global readiness across all MTFs.



Lt. Jodi Carroz
fishes in Guam.
NH / NMRTC
Twentynine
Palms DVIDS)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Medical Exchange Fosters Collaboration in Okinawa

Nakagami Hospital hosted a lecture May 21 where Japanese and USNH Okinawa physicians, including Dr. Amadei De Luca-Westrate (Internal Medicine), Japanese Fellows Dr. Tsurumi, Dr. Kinoshita, and Dr. Hiruma, Dr. Cahill (General Surgeon), Community Relations representative Ms. Kawasaki, and the MTF's Deputy Director Capt. James Demitrack, discussed a case of periorbital edema. Dr. De Luca-Westrate presented the case, followed by discussion with staff and medical students. These exchanges foster collaboration between host nation hospitals and USNHO.



Twentynine Palms' ED Conducts Mass Transfusion Drill

NH Twentynine Palms' Emergency Department, led by Lt. Cmdr. Riley Hoyer, conducted a multi-disciplinary, massive transfusion drill on May 30 that improved the hospital's blood bank capabilities and bolstered operational readiness.

Corpsman Olympics Birthday Celebration

On June 12, NMRTC Twentynine Palms celebrated the Hospital Corpsman's 127th birthday with the annual Corpsman Olympics, a competition spearheaded by Senior Chief Petty Officer Cally Carty honoring the Navy's Hospital Corps. Corpsmen assigned to the NMRTC work and maintain their skills at NH Twentynine Palms. Events included a 5K run, Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) litter carry relay, wound dressing drills, TCCC trivia, a nine-line MEDEVAC exercise, volleyball, and tug-of-war. The Directorate for Administration, headed by Cmdr. William "Bill" Lawson, won first place and the Corpsman Cup. The event supports the Defense Health Agency's mission by enhancing readiness and promoting essential medical skills within the Hospital Corps.



Twentynine Palms' Corpsman Olympics. (NH / NMRTC Twentynine Palms Public Affairs)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Summer Safety Fair Promotes Wellness

NMRTC Twentynine Palms hosted a 101 Days of Summer Safety Fair on June 12, led by Public Health Specialist Tanya Stuckey. Sailors and staff received information on health and safety topics including motorcycle safety, audiology, hydration, and responsible alcohol consumption. Representatives from Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC), regional offices, the Single Marine Program, Joshua Tree National Park, and other organizations provided resources for service members, staff, and families. The event supported the Defense Health Agency's mission by promoting health and wellness, reducing preventable injuries, and ensuring medical force readiness.



NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms hosted its annual 101 Days of Summer Safety Fair, designed to help service members and staff avoid preventable injuries and mishaps during the high-risk summer months. (NH / NMRTC Twentynine Palms DVIDS)



Interagency Drill Enhances Readiness

On June 11, NHC Lemoore, Branch Health Clinic (BHC) Fallon, Veterans Affairs Sierra Nevada Health Care System, and TriWest Healthcare Alliance conducted an All Hazards Emergency Cache (AHEC) exercise at Naval Air Station Fallon. The exercise involved transporting emergency medical supplies and setting up a temporary shelter system as a distribution point. This joint operation streamlined services, shared expertise, and strengthened the support network for service members and veterans.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Oak Harbor Staff Support Suicide Prevention

Five staff from NHC Oak Harbor, including Sailors assigned to NMRTC Oak Harbor who work at the clinic, are participating in the Green Ribbon Program, a suicide prevention initiative developed and implemented by Naval Air Station Whidbey Island Base Chaplain, Cmdr. Miller. The program fosters connection, resilience, and early intervention by encouraging Sailors to recognize distress signs and promote help-seeking behaviors. Participants report a stronger sense of community and improved coping skills. The clinic has five program members.



Green Ribbon Program patch. (NHC / NMRTC Oak Harbor Public Affairs)

Hospital Passes Mortuary Inspection

A Department of Defense inspection team, led by Deborah Skillman, director of Casualty, Mortuary Affairs and Military Funeral Honors, inspected USNH Guam's morgue spaces and casualty affairs programs from June 16-20. The hospital passed with a 99% score and no critical or serious deficiencies.

Yokosuka Enhances Trauma Care

USNMRTC Yokosuka hosted an Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) course at USNH Yokosuka from June 16 to 17 to enhance their medical staff's ability to respond to trauma patients and improve medical readiness. ATLS teaches a protocol-based approach to the initial assessment, resuscitation, and management of severely injured patients. USNH Yokosuka, a certified ATLS training site and the only one in mainland Japan within the military, allows providers from Yokosuka and surrounding areas to receive this required certification, enhancing their ability to respond to trauma patients and improving medical readiness.



USNMRTC Yokosuka hosts an Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) course at USNH Yokosuka. (USNH / USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs)

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Lemoore Improves Disability Evaluations

From May 27-28, three NHC Lemoore staff members attended a virtual training summit on the Disability Evaluation System (DES). The summit brought together medical providers, DES attorneys, case managers, and deployability coordinators. The training helped clinic staff stay current with DES updates, better serve beneficiaries, and optimize clinic workflow.



San Diego Invests in Future Leaders

On May 30, NMC/NMRTC San Diego celebrated the graduation of the latest Division Officer Leadership Course (DIVOLC) cohort. The weeklong course provided 21 junior officers with training in leadership, personnel management, operational readiness, and ethical decision-making. Graduates represented multiple directorates and local commands, demonstrating commitment to professional development, command culture, and Navy core values. DIVOLC reinforces the development of competent and ethical leaders, essential for a medically ready force and effective medical enterprise, supporting warfighter readiness and talent retention.

Okinawa Sailor Wins SARP Award

From October 2023 to September 2024, Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Patrick Smith served as the division officer and clinic manager for the Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Program (SARP) at USNH Okinawa. He reinstated and redesigned the clinic, resulting in a 180% improvement in efficiency and recapturing over \$180,000 in medical costs. In May 2025, he was awarded the Fiscal Year 2024's Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Program Active Duty Counselor of the Year.

Behavioral Health Tech Provides Critical Support in Okinawa

In May, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Michaela Schwartz, a Behavioral Health Technician at USNH Okinawa, bridged critical staffing gaps by serving in both clinical and administrative roles. She achieved the highest patient volume and was recognized for her outstanding performance by Col. Vaioa Leau, the Chief of Religious Affairs for DHA, in May 2025.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Okinawa Corpsman Recognized for Excellence

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Charles Stish received the Directorate for Clinical Support Services (DCSS) Bushido of the Month award for May. The award, represented by a samurai helmet trophy, recognizes technicians who demonstrate excellence and unwavering dedication in their craft. Stish also recently completed the requirements for the new EMT Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC) designation.



HM3 Stish, Bushido of the Month. (USNH / USNMRTC Okinawa Public Affairs)

Yokosuka BioMed Team Recognized

On May 21, USNH Yokosuka's BioMed team celebrated Healthcare Technology Management (HTM) Week, designated by the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI) to recognize the vital contributions of biomedical equipment technicians (BMETs), clinical engineers, and healthcare technology professionals. These experts ensure safe, reliable, and mission-ready medical devices. Commanding Officer Capt. Torrin Velazquez thanked the team, and HM1 Jose Antonio and HM3 Hector Gallardo cut the ceremonial cake. HM3 Gallardo also received his CompTIA Security+ certificate, enhancing cybersecurity capabilities. HTM professionals tackle challenges like cyber threats, aging equipment, supply chain issues, and training, ensuring safe, high-quality patient care.



Above: HM3 Gallardo receiving his certificate. Below: Football at th USNH/USNMRTC picnic. (USNH / USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs)

Yokosuka Picnic Boosts Morale

USNH/NMRTC Yokosuka held a successful command picnic May 22 organized by the MWR Gold Association, Wardroom, CPO Mess, First Class Association, Second Class Association, and Junior Enlisted Sailor Association. The event thanked staff for their dedication and commitment to the mission.



TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Yokosuka Mammographer Wins Award

On May 23, Ms. Marde Buchart, the lead mammographer at USNH Yokosuka, received Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Iwakuni's Impact Award for April from the installation's Commanding Officer Col. Richard Rusnok. Following the departure of BHC Iwakuni's mammographer in August 2024, Buchart volunteered to travel regularly to Iwakuni, ensuring continued access to vital care. She provided walk-in mammography services for up to 50 patients over three days, while maintaining her workload at Yokosuka. Buchart's commitment has had a profound impact on the MCAS Iwakuni community.



Marde Buchart being presented with an Impact Award by the CO of MCAS Iwakuni, May 21. (DVIDS)

Sailors Frocked at Yokosuka

NMRTC Yokosuka congratulated its newest E-6 and E-5 petty officers, who were frocked during a ceremony in the command auditorium May 30.

Commanding Officer Capt. Torrin Velazquez presented frocking letters, followed by the pinning of new ranks by sponsors, family, and friends.

Acting Commanding Officer Capt. Richard Gilliard recognized personnel assigned to USNMRTC Yokosuka who work at USNH Yokosuka during an award ceremony held June 11. Gilliard presented frocking letters to Petty Officer 1st Class Airmarie Devera, Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Miranda, and Petty Officer 3rd Class Maya Wormely, who were then pinned with their new ranks by sponsors, family, and friends.



Newly frocked Sailors at USNMRTC / USNH Yokosuka. Clockwise from top right: HM2 Alexandra Soto, HM1 Michael Murphy, HM2 Matthew Miranda, HM3 Maya Wormely, and HM1 Airmarie Devera. (USNMRTC / USNH Yokosuka Public Affairs)

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

PFPC Facilitates Communication at Yokosuka

A Patient and Family Partnership Council (PFPC) meeting at USNH Yokosuka June 3 facilitated communication between community members and hospital leadership to improve healthcare delivery. The meeting addressed concerns including scheduling procedures, pediatric dental services, the off-base English-speaking medical facility list, and publishing PFPC minutes.



PATIENT AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

COUNCIL SCHEDULE

- JUNE 3, 1145-1245 USNH YOKOSUKA COMMAND AUDITORIUM (3RD FLOOR)
- JULY 8, 1600-1700 ADB AUDITORIUM CRC BLDG
- AUG 12, 0900-1000 FUYU ROOM CRC BLDG
- SEPT 9, 1145-1245 USNH YOKOSUKA COMMAND AUDITORIUM (3RD FLOOR)

To our community members- if there is a specialty or any medical personnel you are hoping to meet, please let us know so we can try our best to ensure attendance. You can also send in questions beforehand to our distro email: dha.yokosuka.yokosuka-nh.list.pfpc@health.mil

Graphic from USNH Yokosuka's Facebook page.

Navy Chiefs Mentor Dental Residents

Graduating dental residents at NH Camp Pendleton participated in an "Ask the Chief" question-and-answer panel June 13, featuring hospital corpsmen in the ranks of chief, senior chief, and master chief petty officer answering questions about the fleet.



Dental residents asking questions to U.S. Navy chief petty officers. (NH/NMRTC Camp Pendleton Public Affairs)

Ambulance Ride-Along Program Enhances Readiness

On June 5, Hospitalman Jessica Sanderson began ambulance duty at Morongo Basin Ambulance Association's (MBAA) Twentynine Palms station, launching a "ride-along" program between NMRTC Twentynine Palms and MBAA. This partnership provides Navy corpsmen who work at NH Twentynine Palms with real-world trauma experience before deployments, enhancing readiness and ensuring a skilled medical force in support of the Defense Health Agency's mission. Corpsmen complete a 12-hour shift every other week for two months while participating in the program.



HN Jessica Sanderson goes along for an ambulance ride. (NH / NMRTC Twentynine Palms Public Affairs)

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Lemoore Prepares for Measles Outbreak

In alignment with the DHA's mission to build military readiness, NHC Lemoore participated in a measles outbreak tabletop exercise held by Kings County on May 29. Lt. j.g. Michael Matthews, preventive medicine department head, and Karl Kassner, medical emergency manager, collaborated with county officials during the exercise to enhance force health protection and medical readiness capabilities.



Lt. j.g. Michael Matthews

Sailors Serve Okinawa Community

USNMRTC Okinawa's Junior Enlisted Association organized a community cleanup on May 31, engaging the command's newest sailors who work at USNH Okinawa. Forty-six JEA members, including Sailors, Marines, and Japanese local nationals, collected 13 bags of trash from Araha Beach, a popular Okinawa destination. In addition to community service, the JEA boosts morale for over 200 junior enlisted personnel by maintaining a cybercafé in the barracks and hosting fundraisers.



USNMRTC Okinawa JEA volunteers.

Okinawa Nurses Recognized for Excellence

USNH Okinawa honored nursing excellence June 10 with DAISY Awards, recognizing nurses for their extraordinary clinical skill and compassionate care. RN Cassie Mahaffey received the Individual Nursing Award for her exemplary bedside care in Labor and Delivery. Lt. Natalie Spritzer, who works in Internal Medicine, received the Nursing Leadership Award for her compassionate leadership and advocacy. The NICU Team received the Team DAISY Award for their empathy, compassion, and dedication during a family's difficult loss of their infant.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Ophthalmologist Earns Submarine Qualification

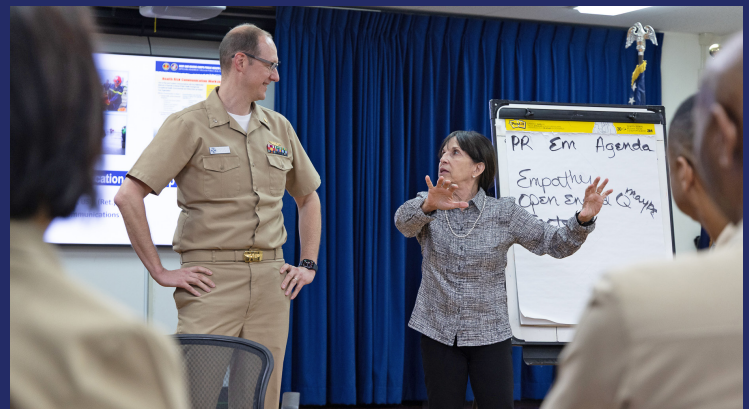
On June 4, Capt. Jeff Bierley, chief of staff for Commander Submarine Group Seven, presented the Submarine Medical Department Officer pin to Lt. Cmdr. Philip Castrovinci, ophthalmology department head at USNH Yokosuka who is assigned to NMRTC Yokosuka. Castrovinci earned the qualification by graduating from the Naval Undersea Medical Institute and Navy Diving and Salvage Training Center, completing extensive underway time aboard a submarine, passing a comprehensive exam, qualifying across all submarine departments, sitting for an official board, and writing a Navy-approved thesis. The SMO pin signifies expertise in undersea and submarine medicine and opens doors to advanced leadership roles in the Navy's undersea medical community.



Lt. Cmdr. Philip Castrovinci earns submarine qualification. (USNH / USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs)

Leaders Trained in Crisis Communication

USNH Yokosuka held a condensed Health Risk Communication Workshop June 6, led by Paul J. Brochu of the Navy and Marine Corps Force Health Protection Command and Sandy Martinez. The training focused on effectively communicating health risks during emergencies, occupational health incidents, and environmental events. Participants learned to address difficult questions, manage public perception, and maintain trust during crises, strengthening the hospital's ability to inform and protect stakeholders while supporting mission success.



Health Risk Communication workshop at USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka. (USNH / USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs)

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Nurse Prevents \$8K Vaccine Loss

On May 8, NHC Lemoore nurse Karen Horner proactively addressed temperature fluctuations in the immunizations department. Noticing an abnormally high temperature in the storage room, Horner discovered a freezer malfunction and quickly notified the biomed department, preventing the loss of over \$8,000 in vaccinations.



Karen Horner

Twentynine Palms PEBLO Wins Award

On May 28, Jessica Hernandez, the Physical Evaluation Board Liaison (PEBLO) at NH Twentynine Palms, received the All-Star award from the Deputy Surgeon General (DSG) at the Department of the Navy (DON) Disability Evaluation System (DES) Symposium. Hernandez's work directly supports the DHA mission of delivering a physically ready warfighting force by enhancing strategic readiness through standardization, resulting in a 50% improvement in data accuracy and expediting readiness planning for over 12,000 service members. Her process improvements led to NMRTC Twentynine Palms achieving the #1 ranking in medical evaluation board (MEB) timeliness among all NMFP commands, and she delivered outstanding case management to three geographically dispersed training units as the sole PEBLO during significant manning shortfalls.



Jessica Hernandez

Okinawa Passes FDA Mammography Inspection

In May, U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa's mammography program received a three-year accreditation from the American College of Radiology and successfully passed an FDA inspection. Lt. Cmdr. Catherine Pilson led the effort to ensure all testing criteria were met.

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Okinawa Tour and Training for Host-Nation ICU Nurses

On May 20, USNH Okinawa welcomed six intensive care unit (ICU) nurses from a local hospital for a tour and hands-on training, furthering partnerships and clinical collaboration. The nurses toured the ICU, Operating Room (OR), Maternal Infant Care Center (MICC), Multi-Service Ward (MSW), and Ambulatory Procedure Unit/Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (APU/PACU), gaining a comprehensive view of patient flow and interdepartmental coordination.



Host-nation ICU nurses visit USNH Okinawa. (USNH / NMRTC Okinawa Public Affairs)

University of Ryukyus Team Tours Okinawa Galley

Staff from the University of Ryukyus Hospital Nutrition Department visited USNH Okinawa May 29. Two dietitians and one chef toured kitchen and storage spaces, and sampled a meal in the galley. Dietitians Lt. Cmdr. Moffitt and Lt. j.g. Ramirez led the tour and information exchange. The visitors observed differences in the inpatient menu choices and portion sizes compared to their hospital.



Staff from University of Ryukyus Hospital visit USNH Okinawa's galley. (USNH / NMRTC Okinawa Public Affairs)

Oak Harbor, San Diego Complete Joint Commission Surveys

NHC Oak Harbor and NMC San Diego successfully completed The Joint Commission surveys in June. Oak Harbor earned Ambulatory Care, Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH), and Behavioral Health certifications, along with its 2025 accreditation. San Diego's triennial evaluation, which reviewed over 1,000 performance elements across patient care, safety, medication management, infection control, and leadership standards, highlighted the MTF's transparency, professionalism, and command-wide readiness culture. San Diego leadership is awaiting the official Notice of Accreditation.

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Health Clinic Supports Local Blood Bank

On June 12, NHC Lemoore's Health Promotions and Wellness Department hosted a blood donation drive with the Central California Blood Center. Eighteen registrants, including clinic staff and beneficiaries, successfully donated blood.

Lemoore Ensures Care During Force Protection Elevation

Lt. j.g. Jessica Lokun responded to U.S. Northern Command's Force Protection Condition elevation June 14, ensuring continuity of care for NHC Lemoore services. Her efforts, in coordination with local experts and command leadership, provided a seamless transition for beneficiaries and continued access to the MTF's urgent care clinic, pharmacy, ScriptCenter, laboratory, and radiology services.



Lt. j.g. Jessica Lokun

Lemoore Clears \$226K in Obligations

During June, Patricia Freeman, NHC Lemoore accounts payable technician, cleared \$226,000 in prior-year unliquidated obligations for redistribution within the Defense Health Agency.

Guam Leaders Attend ROK Seminar

USNH Guam leadership attended a U.S. Alliance Seminar hosted by the Republic of Korea consulate on June 18. The event, held at the Dusit Thani Hotel, aimed to show appreciation and strengthen the alliance between the U.S. and the Republic of Korea.

Sports Physicals Rodeo a Success

Staff from USNH Guam's Branch Health Clinic Apra Harbor provided 48 sports physicals at a Western-themed "rodeo" June 14. The event, complete with country music and cacti, provided physicals for children planning to play school sports in the 2025-2026 school year and was well-received by parents and the community.

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Sasebo Clinic Changes Leadership

Cmdr. Richard Bly relieved Capt. Carol Ellsworth as officer-in-charge of USNMRTC Yokosuka's NMRTU Sasebo during a change of charge ceremony held May 28 at Commander, Fleet Activities Sasebo. The ceremony marked a transition in leadership for the clinic, which provides a full range of medical services supporting the health and readiness of sailors and their families. Staff assigned to NMRTU Sasebo work and maintain their skills at BHC Sasebo.

Graphic from USNH Yokosuka's Facebook page.

Women's Health Day Held at Yokosuka

USNH Yokosuka's Women's Health Day Walk-In Clinic "Rodeo" on June 3 served 56 patients, providing 77 total services, including Pap smears, STI screenings, contraceptive prescriptions, IUD and Nexplanon procedures, and gynecology consultations. The patients included 30 active duty members, 16 dependents, and 10 Space-A beneficiaries. The event was supported by providers, corpsmen, the Health Promotions Team, and American Red Cross Yokosuka volunteers.

USNH Yokosuka's June 3, 2025
Women's Health Day



Total Patients Seen: 56
Active Duty: 30 Dependents: 16 Space A: 10



Thank you to all of our providers, corpsmen, health promotions team and Red Cross volunteers!



A few more photos from NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms' Corpsman Olympics. (NH / NMRTC Twentynine Palms Public Affairs)

INSIDE NMR&D

NMR&D Achieves Advances in Bacteriophage Therapy

Over a six-year Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) award, Navy Medicine Research & Development (NMR&D) achieved key milestones in developing bacteriophage cocktails targeting multidrug-resistant bacteria that pose serious risks to deployed warfighters. Through a global collaboration with Army and Navy research labs, NMR&D built a vast phage library and advanced technologies now poised for FDA clinical trials—offering a precision alternative to antibiotics and strengthening combat casualty care.



Researchers with Biological Defense Research Directorate (BDRD). (DVIDS)

NAMRU EURAFCENT, Guinea Advance Disease Surveillance and Force Readiness

Naval Medical Research Unit (NAMRU) EURAFCENT partnered with Guinea's Ministry of Defense to enhance vector-borne disease surveillance, strengthening U.S. force health protection in the strategically important Gulf of Guinea. Through a GEIS-funded exchange focused on mosquito identification and control, the collaboration supports ongoing regional readiness and expands NAMRU EURAFCENT's role in safeguarding deployed military personnel from infectious disease threats.



Dr. Alia Zayed, with Naval Medical Research Unit (NAMRU) EURAFCENT, leads a session on mosquito identification techniques with Guinean military and health personnel. (DVIDS)

NMRC Inspires Future Scientists at Piney Branch Elementary Career Day

Naval Medical Research Command (NMRC) engaged students at Piney Branch Elementary's Career Day by showcasing military medical research careers through hands-on demonstrations, including a simulated biocontainment hood activity. As the only Department of Defense representative at the event, NMRC highlighted the vital role of science, medicine, and national defense in protecting warfighter health—sparking curiosity and admiration among young learners.

EXMEDS IN FOCUS

NAVY EXMED, Air Force, Train for Joint Operations

Lt. Cmdrs. Benjamin Mattox, Estela Rojas and Lauren Resendiz, assigned to Navy Expeditionary Medical and Warfare Development Center (NEMWDC), were recognized for their swift, life-saving actions during a medical emergency on June 6.

While on a break from Exercise Relentless Valor at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the three Sailors responded to a hotel staff member who had collapsed. They immediately initiated CPR, providing critical aid until emergency responders arrived.

Lt. Cmdrs. Mattox, Rojas, and Resendiz were recognized for their swift life saving actions during a medical emergency. (NEMWDC)



Seabees Enhance Navy Medicine Training with Field Hospital Build

Surgical and respiratory technicians with Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System 4 (ERSS-4) from Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Guam demonstrated their vital role in life-saving care in austere battlefield environments during an ERSS training held at Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center (NEMWDC), June 9-7.

"The goal of this training is not just technical proficiency - it's building confident, adaptable corpsmen who can think critically and save lives under pressure," said Chief Petty Officer Stewart Veal, leading chief petty officer of Education and Training at NEMWDC.



ERSS-4 surgical and respiratory technicians practicing life-saving interventions under field conditions during training at NEMWDC. (NEMWDC)